Faith-Full Families

sources and News for the Church of the Home

Archdiocese of Baltimore & St. Mary's Parish

SAINT MARY'S

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE

ENRICH YOUR FAMILY'S FAITH!

JOIN US FOR OUR ADVENT ASSEMBLY! ~ All adults are cordially invited to Sunday morning faith enrichment in Marian Hall from 9 to 10:10 a.m. on **Sunday, December 6**, when all of the middle schoolers in our Sunday School and their parents are welcome to a seasonal gathering hosted by Fr. Andy Costello entitled "***Advent – Preparing for a Holy, as well as, 'Merry Christmas'***" -- intended to help families celebrate the Advent season. Enjoy free coffee and refreshments!

Our Sunday morning intergenerational format continues to provide inspirational talks on Catholic spirituality. On **Sunday, December 13,** Dr. Greg Mack addresses the topic, "***Discernment & Conscience: the Moral Compass?***"

On **Sunday, December 20,** we begin with our Family Mass at 8 hosted by our Special Education Class. Please bring donations of infant care items for Birth Right of Annapolis like baby bottles and disposable diapers. After Mass, our Fall lecture series, "Awakenings" joins our JFF group as

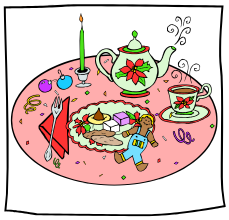


Table Talk

Conversation Starters

My favorite Christmas memory is…

My hope for the coming New Year is…

Retell a Bible story in your own words.

I wish we could go to _____ and why.

A person our family should pray for is…

The best part of living in our neighborhood is…

BLESSED CHRISTMAS:

Families, Reclaim Our Holy Day

By Joanne Haney

What will your family do to keep Christ in Christmas this year?

Christian families hold the key to joyful, exciting family celebrations. Knowing Christ infuses all of life with joy and meaning – especially holidays and special occasions. At the heart of these special times are events that focus on Christ's life and the teaching of the Scriptures. Christmas is a holy day celebrating Jesus' birth.

The significance of this holiday is all but lost in our secularized society. A secular Santa has replaced baby Jesus. Christians need to reclaim the territory of our spiritual heritage.

The responsibility lies on us, as Christian parents, to entrust our children with the true significance of Christmas. Our celebrations must be distinctive, for the sake of our children and of a world that does not know Jesus Christ. If Christ is at the center of our lives and our homes, naturally our holidays and special occasions should reflect this priority.

Some ideas for a Holy Advent & Christmas

- Read aloud the Christmas story in the gospels of Matthew and Luke
- Advent Wreath
- Christmas Creche
- Blessing the Manger
- Feast of St. Nicholas, Dec. 6
- Blessing the Christmas Tree
- Christmas Caroling

Ask your parish catechetical leader for details for these celebrations—or make up your own! No special words or format is needed. Ask your children to contribute their ideas. They will amaze you with their creativity. **Start a new tradition!**

O Christmas Tree!

Some ideas to enrich your family celebration:

Before you select your tree, read what Scripture says about trees. Examples are: Genesis 2:9, Psalms 96: 12; Isaiah 11:1; Acts 10:39; Revelation 22:2.

Leave your tree bare for Advent, waiting--as we are--for Jesus' coming. Then, decorate it with great festivity on Christmas Eve (or as close to it as you can wait!)

Gather around the tree to sing carols and share Christmas memories of years past. Bring out the old videos and picture albums.

Play a Christmas Tree game: One person spies something on the tree and names the color. Others guess until someone gets it right. All take turns.

Take the

FOR YOUR MARRIAGE

Time for Family!

Join Christian Family Movement, Catholic lay organization for faith, friends, and fun.

Receive program books and tips for gathering a few friends to build family faith and Christian community. Great for mixed-church families, since it starts in your home!

Visit www.cfm.org or call Archdiocese of Baltimore Marriage and Family Enrichment at 410-547-5420 to get an **Easy Starter Kit** that has all you need to get a group going, featuring simple program, ***Taking the Time to Make a Difference.***

Pick Up Parenting Pointers & Marriage Moments

Sign up for ideas to enrich your family life, by Catholic family life author, speaker, and coach, Susan Vogt, http://www.susanvogt.net/

Pray for Married Couples

World Marriage Day **February 14, 2010**

Married Couples! You are invited to a special Mass and reception with Archbishop Edwin O'Brien, at **3:00 PM** at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen.

The longest-married couples in the Archdiocese will be recognized. If you think you are – or know -- the longest married couple in your parish, **submit names to your parish office before January 22, 2009.** Also, couples attending who are celebrating 25 or more years will receive a certificate if they register at with the committee at www.wwme.net/registration_wmd.html or call 410-987-8407 beginning Dec. 1.

Catechism Mini-Lesson

The Christmas Mystery (CCC 526)

To become a child in relation to God is the condition for entering the kingdom. For this, we must humble ourselves and become little. Even more: to become "children of God" we must be "born from above" or born or God"

Only when Christ is formed in us will the mystery of Christmas be fulfilled in us. Christmas is the mystery of this "marvelous exchange."

O marvelous exchange! Man's Creator has become man, born of the Virgin. We have been

Visit www.foryourmarrige.org

Rediscovering Epiphany

By Lauri Przybysz

One of the least celebrated parts of the Christmastide, the feast of the Epiphany, January 6, and its accompanying season celebrate God's “revealing” or “manifesting” of Jesus' identity as true God and Savior of the world.
Resist the urge to pack away the Christmas lights early; they should burn brightly on this night.

Epiphany invites us to unpack the jam-packed holiday of Christmas, to revel in the treasures God offers us in Jesus. When we celebrate Epiphany we receive the gift of time, time to savor the last of the cookies, to enjoy the Tree a few days longer, to linger over the beloved ornaments before we return them to the attic.
More than just a remedy for post-Christmas let-down, celebrating Epiphany lets us stop and reflect on what – and who -- Christmas has brought us.

The familiar story of the Magi, those seekers who traveled from afar, shows that God offers the Messiah to the whole world, not to just one race or nation.

In the Epiphany, families can pray to share this new understanding of God’s goodness in the ways they relate to one another and in the ways they open their treasures to others who need them.

Family Activities for Epiphany

- Make and wear crowns.
- Exchange shiny and fragrant gifts.
- Decorate with candles and stars.
- Deliver food to the poor.
- Travel from room to room of the house and mark the doorways with the traditional initials of the “Wise Men” (Kaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar) to bless your home for the New Year.

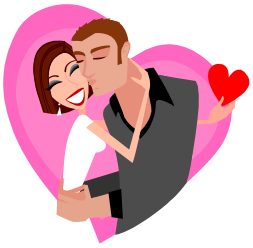
REMARRIED COUPLES’ Retreat

February 19-21, 2010

Holy Trinity Spiritual Center

8400 Park Heights Ave.
Baltimore, MD
Directed by Fr. Bart Karwacki, OFM, Conv.

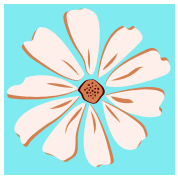
For more information and registration for Remarried in Love events, call Kay LaHatte, 410-335-2897 or cl.kl.lahatte@verizon.net



Cost: $292 per couple, includes 2 nights lodging and 6 meals.
Registration Deposit $50.
Balance due January 31, 2007
Please mail registrations and deposits to
Kay LaHatte, 612 Oakdean Rd, Baltimore, MD, 21220. Financial assistance a possibility.
For more information, call Kay LaHatte, 410-335-2897.

Sponsored by *ReMarried in Love* Group.

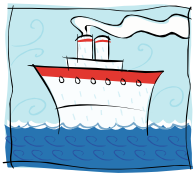
Hope and Healing After Abortion



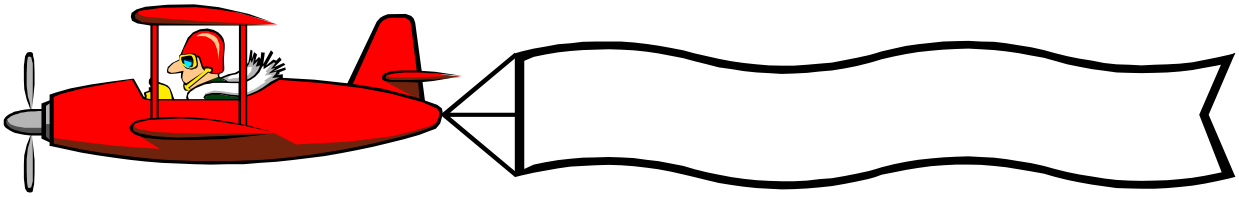
If you or a friend are hurting from an abortion, confidential and compassionate counseling and support are available from Project RACHEL. 410-354-6900 or 1-800-286-4224 www.project-rachel.net

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

WELCOME THE STRANGER



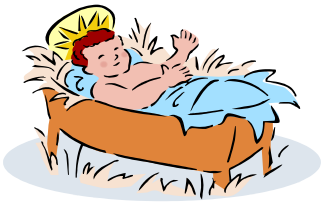
Apostleship of the Sea provide hospitality and ministry to third-world international seafarers whose ships call at Baltimore harbor. If seeing and serving Jesus in the faces of poor lonely third world seafarers struggling in a tough industry and at times abusive environment intrigues you, give it a try. Training is provided.Contact Msgr. John Fitzgerald at 410-889-0351 or johnlfitzgerald@aol.com



Volante Familiar

ADVIENTO – ESPERANDO A
NUESTRO RECIEN NACIDO SALVADOR

Adviento es un tiempo en el cual nuestros corazones rebosan de un amor especial. Es un tiempo muy apropiado para acercarse a otros con amor y generosidad, mientras esperamos el nacimiento del niño Jesús.



Reflexiona Sobre Esto:

Jesús vino a nosotros para que pudiéramos crecer en el amor. Menciona un momento cuando alguien dijo o hizo algo que hizo sentir a otro querido y cuidado. ¿Cómo te sentiste? ¿Cómo cambia el amor a las personas?

_____

_____

Actúa:

El adviento nos recuerda que el mayor don es el regalo de si mismo. Para cada semana de Adviento, tén un acto de bondad o generosidad para expresar tu amor por los demás. Reflexiona sobre estas buenas acciones como *regalo de adviento* para los demás. Como familia, toma unos cuantos minutos en la comida para hablar sobre estos *regalos de adviento*. ¿Qué has hecho? ¿Cómo te sientes al respecto? En una hoja de papel dibuja o escribe algo sobre el *regalo de adviento* que diste a alguien, y colócala junto al árbol de Navidad.

Melodía de Adviento:

Adviento es tiempo para compartir, tiempo para compartir, tiempo para compartir;
Adviento es tiempo para compartir mientras esperamos al niño Jesús.
Adviento es tiempo para orar, tiempo para orar, tiempo para orar; Adviento es tiempo para orar, mientras esperamos al niño Jesús.
Adviento es tiempo para amar, tiempo para amar, tiempo para amar; Adviento es tiempo para amar, mientras esperamos al niño Jesús.

(Esta melodía fue reproducida con permiso de su autora, Patricia Mathson. Originalmente apareció en su libro, Seasons of Celebrations, [Tiempo de Celebración] Ave María Press, 1995. Los diseños en este volante también fueron adaptados del libro de la señorita Mathson con su permiso.)

Sagrada Escritura: (Mateo 1:23b) "y lo llamarás *Emmanuel, que significa 'Dios con nosotros'."*

Recursos: http://www.catholicmom.com/advent_kids.htm . [En inglés] "Etapas de Relajamiento para Gente Ocupada", por Susan K. Rowland, (*Rest Steps for a Rushed People*), Católico al Día (Catholic Update), C1108, St. Anthony Press, 2008. Celebrando Bien la Navidad – Capitulo 44, paginas 136 a 138 en 52 Maneras Sencillas para Hablar de Fe con sus Hijos. (Celebrating Christmas Well), Jim Campbell, Loyola Press, 2008.

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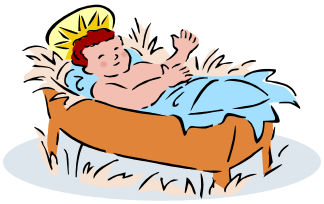
ADVENT – WAITING FOR OUR INFANT SAVIOR

**Advent is a time when our hearts overflow with a special kind of love.
It is a very good time to reach out to others with love and care,
while we await the birth of Jesus.**



Think It Through:

Jesus came to us so that we might grow in love. Name a time when someone said or did something that made you feel especially loved and cared for. How did you feel? How does love change people?

_____

_____

Act:

Advent reminds us that the greatest gift is the gift of yourself. For each week of Advent, do something kind or generous to express your love for others. Think of these good deeds as *Advent gifts* to others. As a family, spend a few minutes at dinner talking about these *Advent gifts*. What did you do? How did you feel about it? On a piece of paper, draw a picture or write about an *Advent gift* that you gave to someone, and place it near your Christmas tree.

Advent Song:

Advent is a time to share, time to share, time to share; Advent is a time to share, while we wait for Jesus.
Advent is a time to pray, time to pray, time to pray; Advent is a time to pray, while we wait for Jesus.
Advent is a time to love, time to love, time to love; Advent is a time to love, while we wait for Jesus.

(SING TO THE TUNE OF “MARY HAD A LITTLE LAMB”)

(This song was reprinted with permission of the author, Patricia Mathson. It originally appeared in her book, Seasons of Celebrations, Ave Maria Press, 1995. The concepts in this flyer were also adapted from Ms. Mathson’s book with her permission.)

Scripture: (Matthew 1: 23b) *And they shall call him Emmanuel, a name which means “God is with us.”*

Resources: http://www.catholicmom.com/advent_kids.htm. *Rest Steps for a Rushed People* by Susan K. Rowland, Catholic Update, C1108, St. Anthony Press, 2008. Celebrating Christmas

Well – Chapter 44, pages 136 to 138 in 52 Simple Ways to Talk to Your Children about Faith, Jim Campbell, Loyola Press, 2008.

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